

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 02869 231915Z

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AMCONGEN NAPLES

AMCONSUL FLORENCE BY POUCH

AMCONSUL TRIESTE BY POUCH

AMCONGEN GENOA BY POUCH

AMCONGEN PALERMO BY POUCH

AMCONSUL TURIN BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2869

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT, US

SUBJECT: BERLINGUER'S SPEECH TO THE PARLIAMENT; A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

REF: ROME 2728

1. ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) SECRETARY GENERAL ENRICO BERLINGUER'S

ADDRESS TO THE PARLIAMENT ON THE DEBATE PRECEDING THE CONFIDENCE VOTE FOR THE NEW MORO GOVERNMENT GENERALLY FOLLOWED THEMES HIS PARTY HAS BEEN REITERATING FOR SOME TIME. BERLINGUER EMPHASIZED THE RESPONSIBILITY THE PCI FEELS IN THE FACE OF THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE NATION AND ONCE AGAIN EXPRESSED THE PCI'S WILLINGNESS TO MAKE ITS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS RESOLVING THEM. THIS MESSAGE ADDRESSES ITSELF TO TWO ASPECTS OF BERLINGUER'S SPEECH WHICH SEEM TO DESERVE SPECIAL ATTENTION, THE POSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC)

IN THE NATION AND THE PCI'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES.

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PAGE 02 ROME 02869 231915Z

2. IN DEFINING THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF LEADING THE COUNTRY OUT OF ITS CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION, BERLINGUER AGAIN ADVANCES

THE HISTORICAL COMPROMISE AS THE FORMULA TO WHICH THE PCI REMAINS COMMITTED. TAKING NOTE OF THE DC LINE THAT THERE MUST BE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MAJORITY AND THE OPPOSITION, HE CLAIMS THAT THE PCI IS THE OPPOSITION. BUT, HE ASKS, "WHERE IS THE MAJORITY." IT HAS CEASED TO EXIST, AS DEMONSTRATED BY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COUNTRY AFTER THE ELECTIONS OF LAST JUNE 15, AND THE TIME HAS NOW MATURED FOR THE MAJOR POLITICAL FORCES TO DEVELOP A UNITARY LINE TO RESOLVE THE COUNTRY'S DIFFICULTIES.

3. HAVING REITERATED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE, BERLINGUER THEN GOES ON TO WAVE THE SPECTER OF A LEFT FRONT GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE EYES OF THE DC, ALTHOUGH INDICATING BOTH TO THE DC AND THE PSI THAT IT IS NOT NOW A PART OF HIS PARTY'S STRATEGY. OBSERVING THAT SOME IN THE DC ADVOCATE THE PASSAGE OF THE PARTY INTO OPPOSITION RATHER THAN GOING INTO A POSSIBLE COALITION GOVERNMENT WITH THE PCI, HE SAYS THAT THE DC MUST MAKE A FUNDAMENTAL CHOICE. "THE DC MUST DECIDE AND SAY IF IT IS MORE CONVENIENT FOR IT AND THE COUNTRY TO BE IN OPPOSITION TO A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND TO THE LEFT...OR TO BE IN A GOVERNMENT OF AMPLE UNITY BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES THAT CONFRONTS DEMOCRATICALLY THE CONSERVATIVES AND THE FORCES OF THE RIGHT." TO GO INTO OPPOSITION, BERLINGUER ADDS, WOULD PLACE UPON THE DC THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY POSSIBLE SPLIT IN THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN THE COUNTRY WHICH COULD, AS IN CHILE, LEAD TO THE POSSIBLE END OF ITALIAN DEMOCRACY. IF THE PROBLEM FOR THE DC IS OPPOSITION FROM ITS ELECTORATE TO THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE, HE STATES IT IS NOW TIME FOR THE PARTY TO SAY SO INSTEAD OF HIDING BEHIND THE POSITION, AS SOME ARE DOING, THAT THE TIME IS NOT YET RIPE FOR SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. IF THIS IS THE CASE, THE DC WOULD DO WELL TO ADMIT IT OPENLY WHICH WOULD BE A FIRST STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION OF WORKING TOWARD THE GOAL OF CREATING CONDITIONS FOR THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE.

4. IN THE BRIEF PORTION OF HIS SPEECH DEALING WITH FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES, BERLINGUER DEFINED THE PCI'S POSITION ON US-ITALIAN RELATIONS. STRESSING THAT ITALY MUST REMAIN INDEPENDENT AND FREE FROM ALL INADMISSIBLE INTERFERENCE FORM
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PAGE 03 ROME 02869 231915Z

OUTSIDE SOURCES, BERLINGUER STATED THAT THE PCI WISHES TO SEE ITALY IN A RELATIONSHIP OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH TH UNITED STATES. HOWEVER "THE RELATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH THE US, WHICH EVEN WE WISH TO CULTIVATE, AND THE SYMPATHY THAT WE FEEL TOWARDS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, CANNOT EXCLUDE AND EVEN DEMANDS PROTEST AND REPULSION AGAINST ANY INTRUSION IN THOSE THINGS WHICH ONLY WE ITALIAN HAVE THE DUTY TO DECIDE."

5. COMMENT: BERLINGUER'S REITERATION OF THE HISTORIC COMPRO-

MISE, AS THE PRINCIPLE STRATEGY OF THE PCI, THROWS A MEASURE OF COLD WATER ON THE INTERVIEW (REFTEL) GRANTED BY PARTY SECRETARY PAJETTA LAST WEEK IN WHICH HE ADVANCED IN RATHER EXPLICIT TERMS THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT. BERLINGUER'S APPROACH WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE SUBTLE AND UNDOUBTEDLY WAS MEANT TO SERVE AS AN OFFICIAL WARNING TO THE DC AT A TIME THAT IT IS WEAK AND UNDER ATTACK FROM MANY QUARTERS THAT THE PCI HAS VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO IT. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT BERLINGUER WAS PIQUED BY PAJETTA'S PRESS FORAY, BUT IT IS CLEAR FROM BERLINGUER'S COMMENTS THAT AS THE TASTE OF POWER BECOMES STRONGER FOR THE PCI, IT IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE LEADERSHIP TO ADHERE CONSISTENTLY TO A LINE WHICH IS NOT BRINGING CONCRETE RESULTS. AS THE DC APPROACHES ITS CONGRESS, SPLIT OVER TACTICS, WEAKENED BY THE CIA AND LOCKHEED REVELATIONS, AND PLAGUED BY THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC ILLS, BERLINGUER HAS PUT THE PARTY ON NOTICE THAT THE PCI HAS THE POSSIBLITY OF FALLING BACK TO THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT WITH THE DC HAVING TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILTYY, ACCORDING TO HIS ARGUMENT, FOR ANY DAMAGE THAT THIS WOULD BRING TO ITALIAN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. VOLPE

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